VILLAGE OF GOUVERNEUR COVID-19 PANDEMIC
UPDATE AS OF TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2020

Well Gouverneur here we are on week thirty of the NYS Emergency Declaration when our whole state went on PAUSE--let me once again remind you of the following so called five pillars of community response that best protects our community against this COVID-19 pandemic per our St. Lawrence County infectious disease expert Dr. Andrew Williams:

1. WEAR A MASK
2. SOCIAL (PHYSICAL) DISTANCE
3. WASH YOUR HANDS
4. STAY HOME IF SICK
5. STAY LOCAL

As you read today’s Tribune (October 9, 2020) we are in Phase 4, which allows more lifting of various restrictions. However, everyone should be aware that we are still on Pause as is all of New York State and expect to be for the foreseeable future. On Friday, September 4th, the Governor signed an Executive Order which continued our current Pause status through the next 30 days (October 4, 2020).

On Thursday, October 1st another estimated 40,000 of our citizens tested positive for COVID-19. Unfortunately, one of the positive cases on that day was the President of the United States, Donald Trump which changed the significance of COVID-19. This case put our national security in high alert, as it is my belief that the President of the United States is arguably the most powerful person in the world. On Friday, October 2nd at 12:54 a.m. the White House announced our President’s condition to the world. At approximately 5:00 p.m. Friday, after our President was administered oxygen at the White House, he was transferred to Walter Reed hospital. Approx. 24 hours later on
Saturday, October 3rd our President did put out a video and our country was relieved that he could at least do this. The next afternoon on Sunday, October 4th he was driven around Walter Reed Hospital to ensure us, I assume, that he was up and going. Yesterday, Monday evening, October 5th he was released from Walter Reed and returned to our people’s home the White House. He was able to walk on his own and gave acknowledgment to us all. What his overall medical status is, is between him, his family and the medical professionals that care for him. But at least it would appear we have continuity of our federal government. Our prayers go out to him and our first lady who also recently tested positive along with many other members of the Trump administration. It would appear that the west wing of the White House is a cluster and/or hotspot and as a result many safeguards have been implemented as of tonight. This is vicious pandemic. The virus does not need a security clearance and does not discriminate.

In other national and global news we have now surpassed more than 210,000 COVID deaths and nearly seven and a half million positive cases in our country. Over 41 million of our school students are learning from home. Globally, most countries are seeing an uptick in positive cases and deaths such as Israel, Argentina, United Kingdom, and India to name just a few.

In State news, the Governor had press conferences both yesterday and today that dealt mostly with so called hotspots in NYC and other urban areas around the city. Some NYC schools were closed effective today. New guidelines were issued on mass gatherings in these aforementioned areas. While the rest of our state continues to average about one percent positive of tests administered the hotspots in all cases are many times higher. On Friday, the state set a new testing record with over 134,000 tests administered. Yesterday our statewide rate was 1.22% versus a neighboring state of Pennsylvania which is 8%.
From the Control Room Board, the Essex County Nursing home that I mentioned last week has suffered another death which now totals 14 which is by far the worst incident we have had in Northern New York. Just over the Northern New York border in Vermont there is a group of immigrants working in an orchard that stayed in the same bunk house that has 26 positive cases as of this morning. In Clinton County they suffered an uptick in the past 24 hours of 12 positive cases one of which is a three year old child attending preschool that contracted the virus in an educational setting.

In our Greater Gouverneur area Edwards Knox Central School suspended all in-class educational activities effective September 30th for at least two weeks. They have experienced at least three positive cases to date with the possibility of more on the horizon. Drive in testing was implemented at the school yesterday, October 5th. Also, locally on a good note, I am happy to report that our St. Lawrence County Colleges are among the top in the nation on a per capita basis when it comes to testing with over 20,000 administered to date. The St. Lawrence County Board of Legislators had a meeting last night but did not have a COVID-19 update. Also in Northern New York our test rate average is .03 for most of the past week. However, that rate graduated to at least .08 for the past two days.

In Countywide news, we have 331 confirmed cases as of today of which 319 have been released. We have 8 active cases none of which are hospitalized. We have suffered four deaths but none recently thank goodness. Our county health care facilities have administered nearly 65,000 tests. During the past week there has been 9 positive cases those being Potsdam 4, Russell 2, and one each in Canton, Edwards and Ogdensburg.
My friends I know this is not a positive report from our President to a three year old in Clinton County registering positive cases in the past week. However, here in Gouverneur our public and private schools are operating and our local governments are open. In the Greater Gouverneur Area we still stand at 3 positive cases since the pandemic began none of which occurred in the past few months. Until next week remember the five pillars. Let’s keep things positive under these difficult situations. Be kind to one another and God Bless each and every one of you.

Submitted by Mayor Ron McDougall